

August 2016



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Thorne/Williams Wildlife Research Center

Flood Recovery Continues

Despite the heat, July in Sybille was spent continuing fencing repairs from flooding this past spring. This month we focused on repairing water gaps and fencing in our bighorn sheep pastures to provide our sheep with better access to fresh grass for grazing.

Biosecurity and Facility Upgrades

In addition to fence repairs and standard animal care, we have begun evaluating our facility management and biosecurity. A number of small upgrades are being implemented at our facility to improve management of our study animals and ensure that the facility is clean and well managed.



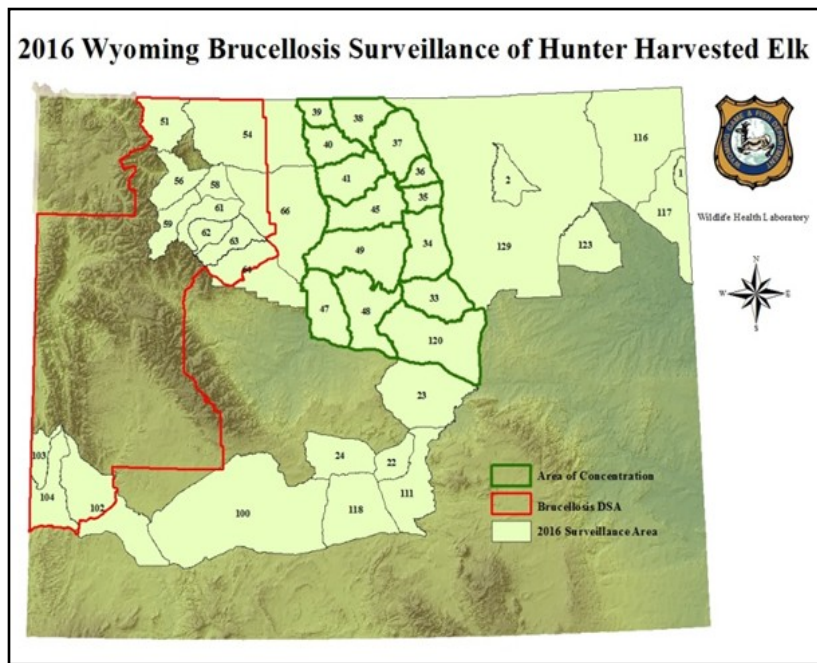
Flood damage to our facility fencing

Elk Exams

All animals at our facility receive routine veterinary care and evaluation. This past July, we handled several of our long-term facility elk to provide annual exams, vaccinations, and place PIT tags for long term identification. We also collected fecal samples and blood samples for routine health screening during these exams. This allows us to monitor our facility animals for basic health status and provide them with any necessary veterinary care.

Brucellosis Surveillance

The staff of the Wildlife Health Laboratory continues assembly work of blood kits for brucellosis surveillance in hunter-killed elk. As of the end of July, over 7,000 blood kits had been assembled, labeled and ready for mailing. The final goal is 11,000 kits by summer's end. The 2016 surveillance will be much like last year's effort, where we will once again intensively concentrate on the Bighorn Mountains, but will also cover hunt areas surrounding the DSA border. In addition, we will also be covering the northeastern corner of the state as part of our statewide surveillance effort. This is an important program and we are always looking for blood samples from elk to document where this disease occurs and where it doesn't – so please keep us in mind whenever you have your hands on elk and can get us a blood sample!



Map showing the scheduled hunt areas (in green) for brucellosis surveillance; hunt areas outlined in dark green are areas of concentrated surveillance.



Kylie Sinclair stands next the storage shed packed full of the blood collection kits she spend the majority of the summer putting together.

CWD Surveillance

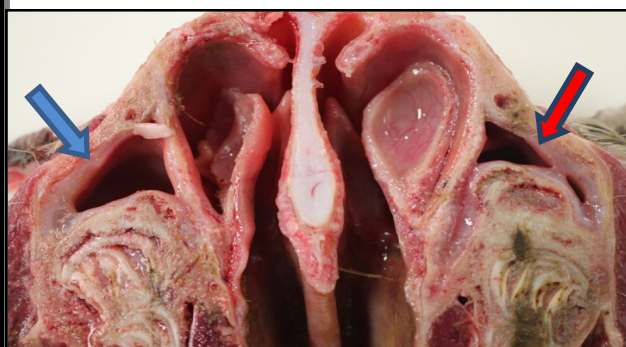
The laboratory staff has also been busy preparing for the surveillance for chronic wasting disease across the state. This year's surveillance will be similar to last year's effort of concentrating on the western "leading" edge of the disease; especially around the two recent positive cases in Cody and the positive in Star Valley. The Green River, Lander, Jackson, Cody, and Casper regions will be actively involved in sample collection, while other areas of the state will be more of an "opportunistic collection" strategy. We will also focus on collecting samples from the historic endemic area in the southeastern corner of the state to continue monitoring prevalence of CWD over time.

Six cases were submitted for diagnostics in July

Species	Date Received	County	Diagnosis
Crow	7/8/2016	Albany	Pending
Mule Deer	7/19/2016	Albany	Pending
Northern Flicker	7/20/2016	Albany	West Nile Virus
Pronghorn	7/22/2016	Albany	Pending
Pronghorn	7/22/2016	Albany	Abscessing serositis
White-tail deer	7/28/2016	Carbon	Pending

Bighorn Sheep Sinus Tumors

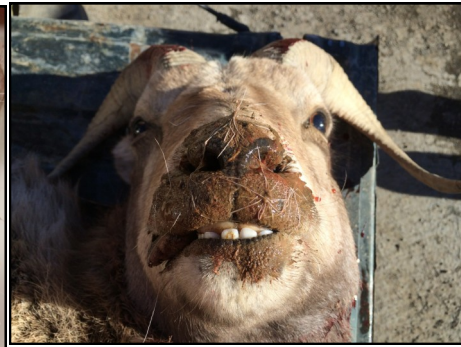
Veterinary Services is once again surveying for sinus tumors in the State's bighorn sheep herds. Collection kits and brochures were distributed to several taxidermists with a request that they save the capped skulls (rather than tossing them in the trash) so that we can examine them for evidence of sinus tumors. These tumors grow within the skull sinuses of the horns, forehead, and above the teeth. We are interested in them because of their potential to contribute to respiratory disease as well as their potential to cause skull and horn deformities. In order to detect nasal tumors, the skull must be sectioned with a band saw to look for the growths. Last year we documented sinus tumors in sheep from Hunt Area 1, 10, 22, and a wondering ram near Lusk.



Sinus tumor in Maxillary Sinus (Red Arrow). Normal Sinus (Blue Arrow).



Sinus tumor in left horn



Bighorn ram with copious amounts of nasal discharge, a consistent finding in bighorn sheep with sinus tumors

West Nile Virus Reminder

Be aware of West Nile Virus this summer. We identified a West Nile positive Northern Flicker from the town of Laramie in late July. West Nile Virus is a mosquito borne disease that is typically transmitted between mosquitoes and birds, but it can also cause illness in other species, including humans. Transmission of this disease is highest in August through early September and we remind you to protect yourself by using insect repellent whenever you are outdoors.